

November 24
1932

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'
MILLENNIAL STAR

ESTABLISHED IN 1840

"The Gospel, resting upon eternal, indisputable principles, maintains the living supremacy of the will of man. The culture, training and use of the will, for good or for evil, determine primarily the direction of an individual life."—JOHN A. WIDTSOE.

No. 47, Vol. 94

Thursday, November 24, 1932

Price One Penny

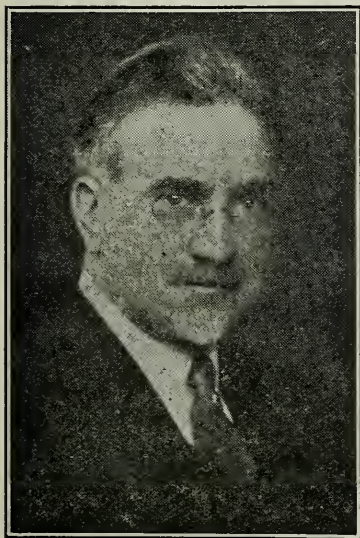
JOHN A. WIDTSOE

ELDER BRYANT S. HINCKLEY, PRESIDENT OF LIBERTY STAKE

UPON what small events hinge mighty consequences! A humble cobbler in Norway said to a widow who brought her boy's shoes to be repaired: "I can give you something more valuable than soles for your son's shoes." When the shoes were returned she found in each of them a "Mormon" tract, and out of curiosity read them. Thus began an investigation which resulted in the conversion and baptism of the mother of Dr. John A. Widtsoe.

Forty-nine years ago this November she came to Utah with her two sons, John A., eleven, and Osborne J. P., six. This widow was not only an educated woman, but a woman of literary ability and deep religious convictions. Her husband, John A. Widtsoe, an educator of recognized standing, died five years before. He was a man of unusual intelligence and moral power, whose family for several generations had been teachers.

This mother brought little, if any, worldly wealth to this land, but she brought a deep and settled determination to educate her



JOHN A. WIDTSOE

boys. Like Cornelia, the Roman mother, she could point with pride to "her jewels." No Roman mother ever gave to the world nobler sons. They were not schooled in the art of war, their conquests were not military; rather they were trained in the gospel of "Peace and Good Will," and, consequently, had no taste for the roar of battle or its carnage. They had that fine creative quality of mind which knows how to propound questions to the undiscovered world of nature about us, and then proceeds to wrest the answer from it. Such minds unlock the treasure-house of truth, enrich the world, and bless mankind.

Alexander the Great mourned because there were no other worlds to conquer, simply because he could not turn his mind to the conquest of unseen but nobler worlds. True, this mother brought little worldly wealth to this land, but the contribution which her sons have made to this Church and to the world, would be hard to estimate.

The younger son, Osborne, died suddenly in his fortieth year, beloved by all who knew him, leaving a past bright with splendid achievements and a future glorious with hope.

Dr. John A. Widtsoe, now in his sixtieth year, has long been recognized as a distinguished scholar. While he was a young man in his late twenties, Charles Loring Jackson, then Erving Professor of Chemistry in Harvard University, said of him :

He is one of the most able men who has come under my instruction, and you should remember that my advanced students are picked men from all parts of the country, He showed remarkable power in his work, and owing to his recent study in Europe is now as well qualified as any one in the country for work in physiological chemistry, in fact I think there is no one in America so well equipped. With this preparation for his work, and the excellent work he did before he went to Europe, we have a right to expect a most distinguished career from him—one that will be followed with interest and admiration by the whole chemical world. . . . He is a very rare sort of man.

This was written of Dr. Widtsoe more than thirty years ago, and his life since that time has verified all of the high predictions made of him by his distinguished preceptor. But to proceed with the narrative of his life!

John A. Widtsoe was born January 31st, 1872, on the island of Froyen, Norway. Six years later his father died. For the next five years he attended private and public schools of his native country with the ministry in view.

In 1881 his mother joined the "Mormon" Church, and in November, 1883, with her two sons, emigrated to America and settled in Logan, Cache County, Utah.

In June, 1891, John A. was graduated from the normal course of B. Y. College, and in July he entered Harvard University at Cambridge, Massachusetts. In April, the following year, he won

a university scholarship, and in April, 1893, he again won a scholarship.

In September of that year he was elected president of Boylston Chemical Club of Harvard, and in June, 1894, he was graduated from Harvard. He completed the work in three years and received the highest honour—*summa cum laude*. This honour may be won in two ways: first—by examinations showing excellent and wide acquaintance in one line of study; or, second—by uniform excellence in all subjects taken. The highest honours may be won in both ways at the same time. Both of these were won by him.

In the *Boston Magazine's* review of the work of this graduating class, the literary quality of the work was represented by selections from the pen of Dr. John A. Widtsoe. Thus at twenty-two years of age he had distinguished himself for his capacity to work, and for superior ability.

On graduating he was offered several alluring positions in the East, but he preferred to come back to Utah. In September of that year he entered the Experiment Station of the Utah Agricultural College as chemist. Here he began his research work in agriculture and published a number of bulletins.

On June 1st, 1898, he married Leah Eudora Dunford, daughter of Susa Young Gates by a former marriage. That same month he was appointed to the Parker fellowship in the Graduate School of Harvard, with the privilege of foreign study. In July he sailed for Europe, and in October began his study in the great University of Göttingen, Germany, as a candidate for a Doctor's degree. In June of the following year he finished his Doctor's thesis and took the examinations of the faculty of that University in November, 1899, winning the degree of Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy with the high honours—*magna cum laude*.

From January, 1900, to May, he studied chemistry in Zurich, Switzerland, and from May to August of that year he resided in London, much of his time travelling in England and on the continent. He sailed for America in September. In the meantime he had accepted the position of director of Utah Experiment Station and professor of chemistry.

In 1905, he became a director of the Department of Agriculture in the Brigham Young University at Provo, and in the spring of 1907 he was elected president of the Utah Agricultural College. His presidency was a period of great prosperity for the College, and the institution gained an international reputation under his administration.

He was made president of the University of Utah in 1916. He continued in this position until he was called to the apostleship in March, 1921.

He was made president of Utah Historical Society in 1921. In 1923 he was invited to serve on a Commission to investigate

government reclamation methods with Julius Barnes, Oscar E. Bradfute, James R. Garfield, Elwood Mead, Thomas E. Campbell, and David W. Davis. In 1925 he was appointed with Governor Campbell to investigate twenty-two Western irrigation projects.

November 21st, 1927, he was set apart to preside over the European Mission, and arrived in England December 24th.

Dr. Widtsoe is a pioneer in extension work. He organized the work of the Utah Experiment Station, and planned and organized the Farmers' and Housekeepers' Institute work, which resulted in the establishment of the Extension division of the Utah Agricultural College. These were the pre-runners of the Farmers' Roundups and Housekeepers' conferences.

His work in Utah has been devoted largely to a study of the agricultural resources of the state. The first soil survey of this state was made under his direction. He inaugurated scientific work in irrigation which was probably the first systematic effort in the world to make irrigation a science.

He won international honour for himself and the state as organizer of the work of dry farming. His best known books in this field are: *Dry Farming*, *The Principles of Irrigation Practice*, and *Western Agriculture*. Some of these have been translated into seven languages. He has published between thirty and forty scientific and popular bulletins on Utah agriculture, and has contributed more than two hundred articles, editorials, etc., bearing upon a variety of subjects of popular interest.

For forty years he has been a leader in public life. He was president of the International Dry Farm Congress when it convened in Canada. He has served as vice-president of the Irrigation Congress a number of times, president of Utah Educational Association, Utah Public Health Association, and of the Utah Irrigation Congress, and is a member of numerous societies, boards, and commissions at home, and has been elected to membership in many scientific societies in all parts of the world.

The Utah Agricultural College and the University of Utah gave him the honorary degree LL.D.

Dr. Widtsoe is an author, a scholar, a specialist, skilled in handling the problems of human nature and of nature, of boys and men as well as crops and animals, one of the distinguished administrators and leaders of this country. He is pre-eminently a scientist. He has majored as such, and has made contributions in scientific fields of practical and far-reaching importance. As an industrial chemist he undoubtedly could have made a fortune and secured fame.

He served as president of the Utah Agricultural College for nine years, and as president of the University of Utah for five years. These are executive positions of the highest responsibility, positions which make unusual demands upon one's thought and attention, but during this time he was making contributions in

other fields. One is impressed with the quality and amount of work which he can do. He is a productive worker and his work is of the highest order. He has the rare capacity of seeing things in their proper relation and the ability to express himself with clearness and beauty. His name will stand forever among the distinguished scholars and educators of the Church.

There is a simplicity, a teachableness, a gentility and consideration for others about him, which is characteristic of the truly great. The depth of his understanding, the breadth of his tolerance, the absence of dogmatism, the wisdom and effectiveness of his diplomacy are all evidences of real superiority.

From his boyhood he has been active in the organizations of the Church, and is one of the best informed Elders in doctrine and Church organization. He has written a number of manuals and many popular articles on gospel subjects. Among his theological writings should be mentioned: *Joseph Smith as Scientist, Rational Theology, Concordance of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, What Jesus Taught, In Search for Truth.*

Gospel Doctrine by Joseph F. Smith was compiled largely by him, and *Discourses by Brigham Young* was compiled and prepared by him.

Since he was called to preside over the European Mission in November, 1927, he has written a series of tracts in which the Gospel is interpreted in terms of to-day with such simplicity and clearness as to place it within the understanding of all.

Fourteen years ago he wrote :

WHAT MY FAITH MEANS TO ME

My faith in the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as restored by the Prophet Joseph Smith, places me in possession of an all-comprehensive philosophy according to which I can order all the affairs of my life, whether of a temporal or spiritual nature.

By this faith I draw wisdom from the past, obtain visions of the future, and walk fearlessly in the present, with a full assurance that God's goodness will guide me.

By this faith I am able to interpret whatever I learn of this or of any other time, and find its place in the eternal scheme of things.

By this faith, which teaches me that I am eternal, with an existence before this life, and an ever active life hereafter, I am given full courage to battle against evil, whether in me or in others.

By this faith, which promises the endless triumph of the progressing spirit of man over the things of the universe, I attack the duties of my daily life with the clear confidence that if I but do my duty well, I shall find the way to the mastery of the earth and all earthly tasks.

By this faith my joy in life is abundant, my sorrows are tempered, my trust in the ultimate triumph of good over evil is unshakable.

By this faith I learn more and more to hate sin and to reach out a helping hand to the sinner.

By this faith, which embraces a complete plan of man's endless journey from a dim past into an eternal future, I learn that I need God's help in

all that I do, but also, as a glorious comfort, that God, to a small degree, infinitely small perhaps, needs me and all His children to work out His mighty purposes. It is good to know oneself in partnership with God.

By this faith, amidst the wearisome toil and the strife of the heat of the day, I am at rest and at peace, for I know my history and my destiny and the eternal meaning of the day's work.

By this faith I know that however lowly my task in life may be, before the judgment seat of God, if my work has been well done, it shall be transmuted into spiritual values, and my soul shall know that I have been doing necessary work for the fulfillment of the Master's plan.

By this faith I am unafraid, for I know that God's power is everywhere and that I never walk alone, but that in joy or sorrow, at home or abroad, God's will guides me.

By this faith it is easy to lay aside the material for the spiritual things of life; to exchange the honour of men for the service of God.

By this faith my life is one of gratitude for the favours received, and of trust that whatever is for my good will be given me if I strive for it honestly.

By this faith I know the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God; the joy and necessity of serving and helping my fellow man; and the satisfying fellowship of my brethren and sisters.

By this faith I know that whatever of experience I have gained in this life will be mine forever, and that my family and children are mine to the end of an endless day, in which I shall grow to the fuller stature of a God-like man.

All these and a thousand other things that would fill many volumes does my faith mean to me. (*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 53, p. 461.)

Every word of this declaration is big with meaning and every paragraph is a text. We have rarely read anything that contains so much in so few words. It is so simple and yet so all-comprehensive, so compact with meaning and yet so luminous and far-reaching, so practical and yet so beautiful and soul satisfying—permeated with hope and glorified with a sublime faith, this is a remarkable philosophy of life.

It was a significant day in the life of John A. Widtsoe when he married Leah Dunford. No woman could have complemented more completely his life than she has done. With an intelligence and an understanding of the most unusual order, she has promoted his interests. Appreciating his capacity and the importance of his work, she has sought to relieve him of all possible burdens, and has managed his home and borne the responsibilities of the family as far as possible, in order that he might be free and unhampered in the pursuit of his labours; she has shown marked ability in doing this.

She is a college-bred woman of capacity and intellectual power, whose soundness of judgment, evenness of temper, and sweetness of disposition have won the confidence and affection of all who knew her.

She has co-operated with her husband in his work and sustained him in every crisis of his life. With dignity and ability she

presides in his household and manages its domestic affairs in a way to make their home a delightful center, where notables have been entertained and charmed with the spirit of welcome and hospitality which prevails there.

Under the direction of Dr. Widtsoe, she presides over the Relief Society, Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association, and Primary Association of the European Mission. Congenial, constructive in thinking, genuinely religious, she is a leader among women.

Dr. Widtsoe's fine Scandinavian background, his wise choice of a companion, his profound understanding of the glorious religion of the Master as revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith, and his deep devotion to it—all of these synchronizing completely with one of the most original and brilliant intellects we have known, accounts for his splendid achievements and predicts a great future for him.—(Published in *The Improvement Era*, November, 1932.)

WORD OF WISDOM THE WILL OF GOD

PRESIDENT JOHN A. WIDTSOE

THE Lord has given us a series of principles—laws, if you choose, specific in their nature, which may be used safely by the Latter-day Saints for the preservation of physical and mental health. I refer to the Word of Wisdom, a great and a marvellous document, given us for our good; itself a witness that in the economy of the Lord the care of the body is very important, not to be neglected or forgotten. I know that many people believe that the Word of Wisdom is not a binding law upon us. To that view, I can only answer that yesterday I heard the Prophet of God—I believe and know him to be a prophet of God—say to the Latter-day Saints, that it was their duty to obey the Word of Wisdom. That ought to be sufficient for all Latter-day Saints. But, we find from the very beginning, the Word of Wisdom has been held to be a binding law upon the Latter-day Saints. The Patriarch Hyrum Smith, brother of the Prophet, in a sermon which has been preserved and reproduced a number of times, warned the people of that day, about 1843, against following any Elder of the Church who declared that the Word of Wisdom was not binding upon the Latter-day Saints. Brigham Young, the great successor of the Prophet Joseph Smith, upon many occasions, urged the Latter-day Saints to obey the Word of Wisdom; and at least on one occasion said definitely that the Spirit had directed him to tell the Latter-day Saints to obey the Word of Wisdom. If I read the revelation on the Word of Wisdom correctly, I find it says that the Word of Wisdom shows "forth the order and will of God in the temporal salvation" of His people. Whatever is the *will* of God appears to me to be equivalent to a commandment.—(Extract from discourse delivered in Salt Lake Tabernacle, General Conference, April 5th, 1926.)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1932

EDITORIAL

THE CLOSE OF AN ACTIVE LIFE

ANOTHER mighty man has fallen in Israel! After many months of suffering, the spirit of Elder Joseph W. McMurrin was released from its earthly tabernacle, and he went to continue his labours behind the veil. Although the end of this great man had been looked for, yet when it came, it proved a great shock to all his friends, who mourn the loss of a stalwart in defense of truth and righteousness. The end came at his home in Los Angeles, California, on the evening of October 24th. At his bedside, when death came, were his wife, Mrs. Mary Hunter McMurrin, and members of his family. One of his last utterances was to his wife, "Take me in your arms."

President McMurrin was looked upon as one of the outstanding missionaries in the Church. Two great qualities he richly possessed—courage and zeal. Sacrifice of time, unstinted effort, meant little in comparison with carrying the message that burned in him to others. It mattered not whether those who gave him a listening ear were sunk in the depths of poverty. His mission was to any and all. In his preaching the same zeal and sincerity manifested itself. He knew the Scriptures accurately and extensively. He based his sermons upon their Holy Word. He went consistently to work to prove the authenticity of his message. His words poured forth like a storm.

When his Scotch parents knew they were to have a child, they prayed that it might be a boy, that they could consecrate him to the service of God. Every act of his life was the fulfillment of that destiny.

Apostle David O. McKay, who represented the General Authorities of the Church at the funeral, told the assembly that his affectionate regard for Elder McMurrin was intensified by their association. "His life," he continued, "exemplified the five salient marks of greatness: He chose the right; he resisted temptation; he bore his burdens cheerfully; he was calm in the storm, and he relied on the truth, on virtue, and on God unalterably." And what more could one ask of a man in the service of the Lord? This one thing: He offered his life for his friends. Among the last words he spoke were: "I am going to my God."—JAMES H. WALLIS.

JOSEPH W. McMURRIN—BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Joseph William McMurrin was born September 5th, 1858, in Tooele City, Utah, the son of Joseph and Margaret Leaing McMurrin, who emigrated to Utah in 1856.

Shortly after his birth, his parents moved to Salt Lake City, where he spent his boyhood days. In his young manhood, President McMurrin was a teamster, freighting between the mining camps of Ophir, Bingham and Park City to Salt Lake City. As a stone cutter he assisted in fashioning many of the blocks of granite which were used in the building of the Salt Lake temple.

When eighteen years of age President McMurrin was called on a mission to Arizona and assisted in colonizing the town of St. Joseph on the Little Colorado river. After two years in that territory, where he engaged in the building of dams and canals, he returned to Salt Lake and was released from the Arizona mission to fill a mission in England, leaving for that field in October, 1881. On his arrival in Liverpool he was assigned to the Scottish conference, over which he presided for seven months. During his missionary labours there he baptized fifty persons, including two of his father's sisters. On his return to Salt Lake he became active as a home missionary.

On November 28th, 1885, President McMurrin was shot twice through the stomach by a United States deputy marshal, perforating his intestines, while the officers were making a raid in quest of violators of the Edmunds Tucker act. Being wounded in such a vital part, no hope could be entertained that human skill would be of any avail in saving his life. The most eminent doctors in the city said it would be impossible for him to live. Brother McMurrin also felt that his life was fast ebbing away, and fully expected to die. While in this condition, and believing that he had but a few hours at most to live, he was visited by Apostle John Henry Smith. This servant of God took him by the hand and said; "Brother Joseph, as an apostle of the Lord Jesus, I promise you in the name of Jesus Christ, that if you desire to live, you shall live, no matter what the doctors may say to the contrary."

In 1886 President McMurrin left on his second mission to Europe, spending twenty months in the Bristol conference and twenty-eight months in the London conference, over which he presided for twenty-six months. On this mission he was accompanied by his wife.

His third mission to Europe began in July, 1896, and continued to December, 1898. During these two and one-half years he acted as one of the presidents of the European mission and travelled extensively on the continent.

While on this mission he was chosen as one of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies and was set apart by President Anthon H. Lund at Liverpool, while the latter was en route to the Holy Land.

Following his return to Utah, President McMurrin travelled throughout the stakes and wards of the Church and in 1901-02 assisted in the organization of the Boise branch, which later became the Boise stake. He also assisted the late Apostle Abraham Owen Woodruff in colonizing the Big Horn country in Wyoming.

On April 3rd, 1919, he was selected as president of the California mission and served until January, 1932, when he was released owing to ill health and was succeeded by President A. A. Hinckley.

Surviving are his widow, whom he married in April, 1880, and the following sons and daughters: Joseph W. McMurrin, Jr., Stephen H. McMurrin, Waldo McMurrin, Everard L. McMurrin, Rulon McMurrin, Mrs. Chalda McMurrin Horton and Mrs. Lucille McMurrin Chipman.

Throughout his life, President McMurrin has been engaged in missionary work, serving faithfully as a home missionary and in foreign fields. At various times he has served as a member of the General Board of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association, Religion Class and Priesthood committees.—(*Deseret News*, October 25th, 1932.)

"MORMONS" AND MARRIAGE

UNDER this caption, the *Radio Times*, the journal of the British Broadcasting Corporation, numbering three-quarters of a million circulation, recently called its reader's attention to the fact that on a certain night the Rev. William Teeling, a Catholic priest, who contested the Silvertown (London) constituency against Mr. Jack Jones, would broadcast a talk over the B. B. C., giving a picture of the varied conditions throughout Canada, which country he had recently visited, and incidentally would have occasion to refer to the "Mormon" people in Western America. The *Times*, editorially mentioning the fact, makes the following very fair reference to our people:

The word "Mormon" has passed into everyday English as a synonym for "polygamist." This is neither just nor correct. A few of the early "Mormons," including the first President, Joseph Smith, indulged in plural marriages; their lead was followed by only a small percentage of "Mormons," and by none after the 'nineties of last century. The correct title of this sect is "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." Its "bible," known as the Book of Mormon, is said to contain the "fulness of Christ's Gospel," and to have been found engraved in a strange language upon gold plates which were hidden on a hill top near New York by a heavenly being by the name of Mormon. Smith, who founded the sect in 1830, claimed the whereabouts of the plates and a key to the translation of them were revealed to him in a dream by Mormon's son, Moroni.

The Book of Mormon has been published in many languages, and the "Mormons" to this day maintain two thousand missionaries who spread the faith. The "Mormon" headquarters are at Salt Lake City, Utah. They were established there by Brigham Young, the Grand Old Man of "Mormonism," a courageous pioneer and brilliant business brain. The sect is now said to number almost three quarters of a million. They are solid, industrious, and wealthy—in itself enough to constitute them a "strange" sect in these days.

Allowing for the minor inaccuracies in the above statement, undoubtedly inadvertently made, Rev. Teeling's talk is another evidence of the essential honesty and wholesomeness of "Mormon" life and doctrine. Fair-minded travellers, from every country, can only speak well of the Latter-day Saints as a people.

We are glad that through the three million radios in Great Britain there was this fair though modest representation of the "Mormons," formerly much abused in this otherwise enlightened land.—JAMES H. WALLIS.

WANTED.—The following single copies of the *Millennial Star*: No. 5 of 1924, and Nos. 1-5 inclusive, 17, 22, 35, 39 of 1927. Address *Millennial Star*, 43 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1.

ABRIDGEMENT OF THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM

DR. SIDNEY B. SPERRY

THE little volume of Scripture known as the Book of Abraham, will some day be reckoned as one of the most remarkable documents in existence. In this article the writer wishes to call the attention of Latter-day Saints to but one of its notable features, namely, its relationship to Genesis 12: 1-13. For a number of years I have strongly felt that chapter two of the Book of Abraham is the original account from which Genesis 12: 1-13 was made. Putting it in another way, the account in Genesis is nothing more or less than an abridgment of that in the Book of Abraham. For this conclusion the writer is solely and alone responsible. He feels, however, that the evidence is sufficiently strong to merit the close attention and study of every member of the Church.

It is apparent at the outset that the author or editors of the book we call Genesis, lived after the events recorded therein took place. Our text of Genesis can therefore not be dated earlier than the latest event mentioned by it. It is evident that the writings of Abraham while he was in Egypt, of which our printed Book of Abraham is a copy, must of necessity be older than the original text of Genesis. I say this in passing because some of our brethren have exhibited surprise when told that the text of the Book of Abraham is older than that of Genesis.

The Book of Moses makes it very plain that God directly revealed to Moses all the information necessary to account for the events written in Genesis up to and including chapter 6, verse 13. How much more of the material in Genesis was directly revealed to Moses we are not told. But we may justly surmise that Moses had access to some written records which he also used.

Whether he did use what is now chapter two of the Book of Abraham is the problem before us. It will be noticed that I assume the Mosaic authorship of the original text of Genesis. For this I offer no apology whatever, in spite of the trend of modern biblical scholarship. No Latter-day Saint can afford to overlook the evidence of the Book of Moses, the Book of Mormon and of the Inspired Revision of the Bible on this point.

Let the reader make but a casual comparison of Genesis 12 : 1-13 and the second chapter of the Book of Abraham and he will discover that an apparently close relationship exists between them. Certain very striking resemblances between the two, led the writer to make an extended study in the hope of discovering the reasons underlying them. The similarity cannot be accidental. Let two parallel passages be placed before us. Genesis 12 : 4 and Abraham 2 : 14 will serve :

Genesis 12 : 4—So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken unto him : and Lot went with him : and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

Abraham 2 : 14—So I, Abraham, departed as the Lord had said unto me, and Lot with me ; and I, Abraham, was sixty and two years old when I departed out of Haran.

Three things are immediately apparent. In the first place the account in the Book of Abraham is written in the first person, that of Genesis in the third person. Secondly, the accounts do not agree as to the age of Abraham when he left Haran. Thirdly, the Book of Abraham writes the name of the great patriarch "Abraham" as against "Abram" in the Genesis version. It is self-evident that the Book of Abraham does not copy verbatim, if at all, from the King James version as some of its critics may presume. Had Joseph Smith been an impostor, the chances are very good that he would have made Abraham's age agree with that given in Genesis. Furthermore, it is doubtful he would have called the patriarch "Abraham" before the latter came to Egypt. The version in Genesis does not call him "Abraham" until he had long been back from that country. (See Genesis 17 : 5.) Naturally, a Latter-day Saint believes in the independent character of the Book of Abraham. From the two short parallels quoted above, we admit that the differences between the Abrahamic account and that of Genesis are but presumptive evidence of the independence of the former from the latter. But when the whole of the Abrahamic account is examined, the evidence is very convincing. The account of Abraham is fuller and contains much explanatory material valuable in appraising the life and work of the great biblical character that is not to be had in the familiar version of Genesis. That is just what we should expect in a first hand account. Furthermore—and this is the strongest evidence of all—a linguistic study of the Book of Abraham and of the parallel versions of the Bible points unmistakably to the independent character of the Egyptian record and to the conclusion that it is, at least, the *possible original* from whence the account in Genesis was taken.

The writer compared the parallel accounts in the Egyptian record with the Hebrew, Greek, Syriac, Latin and Samaritan versions and also with the Targum of Onqelos, an Aramaic ver-

sion of the Pentateuch. I shall not burden the reader with the minutiae of this study in textual criticism. Three or four examples will suffice. Thus, a comparison of Genesis 12: 3 and Abraham 2: 11 reveals that the Greek, Syriac, Latin and Samaritan versions support the reading "curse them" in the Book of Abraham as against the Hebrew and King James versions which read "curse him." At the end of this verse the Syriac adds the phrase "and in thy seed." The Book of Abraham seems to support this addition.

Abraham 2: 19 (cp. Genesis 12: 7) supports the Greek, Syriac, Latin and Samaritan versions in reading "and said to him I will give."

The last word in the phrase, "and pitched my tent there," of Abraham 2: 20 (cp. Genesis 12: 8) is supported by the Greek and Latin versions.

Abraham 2: 22 (cp. Genesis 12: 11) is supported by the Hebrew and Syriac in reading "behold." The Greek and Latin omit.

These examples demonstrate in striking fashion that the text of Abraham 2 is bound up in a real way with the early history of the text of Genesis 12: 1-13, and that its readings pursue an independent course in respect to the Bible versions. This is what we should expect in an original document. It is interesting to note that the Book of Abraham affirms the essential trustworthiness of the Hebrew text of Genesis 12: 1-13. The record witnesses, with the Greek and Latin, the existence of a Hebrew text older than the one in our possession. This is an important point. Had the Prophet Joseph Smith blindly added to or slavishly followed the King James version his translation would have lacked the ear-marks of a genuine ancient production.

At the time Joseph Smith translated the Book of Abraham, he did not have sufficient linguistic knowledge to strew along the way the remarkable tell-tale evidence any competent Bible scholar can find in the chapter we have considered. The evidence, I say, irresistibly leads me to the conclusion that our present text of Genesis 12: 1-13 is an abridgment, written in the third person, of the second chapter of the Book of Abraham. Critics of this volume of Scripture may differ from the conclusion advanced herein, but the problem of satisfactorily accounting for the remarkable linguistic characteristics of the book will still remain.

To Latter-day Saints the Book of Abraham ought to prove useful as a source document of great worth. It opens up afresh the whole question of the structure and history of the text of Genesis.—(Published in *The Improvement Era*, October, 1932.)

WE want knowledge, but knowledge will only be ours as we earn it by the sweat of our own brows and anguish of our souls.—
LEVI EDGAR YOUNG.

MANCHESTER DISTRICT CONFERENCE

POINTING out the Latter-day Saint philosophy as "The Way to Perfection," British and European Mission Authorities addressed three well-attended sessions of the Manchester District Conference, October 30th, in the Co-operative Hall, Manchester. District President Martin R. Braithwaite called the morning session to order by cordially welcoming all visitors, and briefly outlined the day's proposed programme. The regular division of the Relief Society and Priesthood then took place, each group receiving encouragement and direction from the visiting authorities.

Short talks were delivered in the afternoon service on the function and organization of the various auxiliaries. Sister Margaret Wiles discussed the Sunday School; Sister May Pullen, the M.I.A.; Sister Florence Allsop, the Relief Society; and Elder William Boreham, the Priesthood. President Braithwaite submitted a report on the accomplishments of the travelling Elders of the district during the past six months, outstanding facts of which were: Fourteen new members enrolled; 1,397 hours spent distributing 85,850 tracts, 81 copies of the Book of Mormon, and 925 books and pamphlets; a total of 4,234 hours' work; and an increase of 24 per cent. in the payment of tithes. Thirty-one patriarchal blessings were given.

Sister Rintha P. Douglas told of the missionary labours and hardships of the early Church leaders, and compared them with the activities and experiences of modern day representatives. Patriarch Wallis then delivered an inspirational address, relating how the Gospel found him during his boyhood days in London, his missionary experiences, and the priceless value he had placed on the Gospel throughout his life. President James H. Douglas read Parley P. Pratt's account of the rebuke administered the guards at Carthage jail by the Prophet Joseph Smith while the Prophet was confined there. Reciting the Articles of Faith, he commented upon their sound theology and prophetic character. Several musical numbers were rendered at intervals during the discourses.

The following Mission Authorities and missionaries were present: Patriarch James H. Wallis of the European Mission; President and Sister James H. Douglas and Elder Percy L. Matthews of the British Mission; President Martin R. Braithwaite and Elders Lonis G. Robinson, Eugene A. Hooper, Levi D. Hammon, and Alma J. Larkin of the Manchester District; President Dan L. Frodsham of the Hull District; President Randall H. Walker of the Nottingham District, and President Eric J. Seiach of the Norwich District.

LOUIS G. ROBINSON, Clerk of Conference.

I PROMISE you that your financial troubles will disappear if you will only be absolutely honest with the Lord and economical—not extravagant.—HEBER J. GRANT.

CHURCH WIDE NEWS

CHARLES CURTIS, Vice-President of the United States, honoured Utah with a three-day visit, October 14th-17th. During his stay he attended devotional services in the Salt Lake Tabernacle, and also participated in the Founder's Day programme of the Brigham Young University, Provo.

A NOVEL feature of the late General Conference of the Church occurred October 9th, at the Sunday afternoon session, when 12,000 people in attendance witnessed the Tabernacle choir and organ perform in a nationwide broadcast.

HUNDREDS of Church members will be qualified as able genealogists at the conclusion of the three-year study course in genealogy and temple work which is contemplated throughout the Church beginning on the first of the coming year. The subject for the first year's course will be entitled, "Our Lineage."

"ONE hundred per cent. of the priests, teachers and deacons in each ward or branch enrolled on the quorum roll books," is the objective of the Aaronic Priesthood between now and December 31st, according to an announcement by the Presiding Bishopric. An analysis of the report for the past six months show a total Aaronic Priesthood membership of 71,167, with 61,008 accounted for on the roll book, and 10,161 unaccounted for.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD

Releases and Departures: The following missionaries have been honourably released from their labours in the British Mission to return to their respective homes in the United States: Elder David Taylor of the Leeds and Scottish Districts, released October 3rd; Elder Dan L. Frodsham of the Leeds, Manchester and president of the Hull Districts, released October 24th, and both sailed on the s.s. *Manhattan*, November 17th; Elder Martin R. Braithwaite of the London and president of the Manchester Districts, released November 10th; and Elder William K. Whatcott of the Manchester and Newcastle Districts, released October 24th, both sailed on the s.s. *Leviathan*, November 26th.

Doings in the Districts: *Birmingham*—Five persons were baptised by Elder Robert L. Bridge and local Elder John B. Ward at a service conducted October 29th, in the Handsworth Branch chapel. The applicants were confirmed members of the Church the same day.

Newcastle—A baptismal service occurred in the Sunderland chapel November 5th, when five persons were baptised by Elder Robert H. Booth. Confirmation took place the same evening.

Branch Conferences: Of the Clayton Branch, Leeds District, October 16th. Local members impresssvely depicted the theme, "Revelation." Numerous musical numbers added to the interest of the occasion.

Of the Luton Branch, London District, October 23rd. "The Glory of God is Intelligence" served as a topic for the addresses of the day.

Of the Nuneaton Branch, Birmingham District, October 16th. All in attendance experienced a time of rejoicing as the subject "Seeking After Our Dead" was developed.

Of the Kidderminster Branch, Birmingham District, October 23rd. During the morning session the members of the Sunday School each recited an excerpt from one of the Psalms of David.

Of the Norwich Branch, Norwich District, October 23rd. Elucidation of the subject "Faith and Prayer," proved inspirational and helpful to all present.

Of the Shildon Branch, Newcastle District, October 16th. An outstanding feature of the event was the exceptionally large attendance.

FATHER! LEAD ME OUT OF DARKNESS

FATHER! lead me out of darkness by the Gospel's holy call.
 Lead me into life eternal—grant me ready strength for all:
 Sinful longing and life's trial, may they meet an armored heart;
 Let Thy promise rest upon me, so that mine, the better part.

Father! blinded by the earth-light, do I cry for higher aid.
 All I know that Thou art Father, in Thy hand my life is laid.
 Greater light I seek, my Father, in the man-made chaos here.
 I will meet the heat of battle, but, oh Father, be Thou near.

Father! bless Thy drifting children, they who see not with their eyes;
 They who seek for truth unchanging, pass the source, yet do despise;
 May all evil, fiercely raging, lose its boasted pow'r on earth;
 That the creature rise not higher than the God who gave it birth.

Father! all my heart I give Thee; all my service shall be Thine.
 Guide me as I search in weakness, let Thy living light be mine.
 Hear me as I pray in meekness, let my strength be as the day.
 Give me faith: the greater knowledge, Father! bless me as I pray.

JOHN A. WIDTSOE.

DEATH

CASTLETON—John Frederic Castleton, Lowestoft Branch, Norwich District, passed away October 19th, at the age of twenty-four years. Although not a member of the Church himself, his family has been associated with it for a number of years. Services were held in the branch chapel under the supervision of President Eric J. Seaich, and the grave was dedicated by Elder Carl G. Agren.

CONTENTS

John A. Widtsoe 753	Abraham 763
Word of Wisdom the Will of God 759	Manchester District Conference 766
Editorials:	Church Wide News 767
The Close of an Active Life 760	From the Mission Field 767
"Mormons" and Marriage 762	Poetry: Father! Lead Me Out
Abridgement of the Book of	of Darkness 768

PUBLISHER: JAMES H. DOUGLAS, 43 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

EDITORS: JOHN A. WIDTSOE, 295 EDGE LANE, LIVERPOOL

JAMES H. WALLIS, 43 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1